

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 MANAGU 02506 01 OF 02 271801Z

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-15 DHA-02 TRSE-00 AID-05 IO-13 ACDA-10

OMB-01 IGA-02 EB-07 /107 W

-----271859Z 087421 /45

P 271647Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3301

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 MANAGUA 2506

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, US, NU

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO LONG SUBCOMMITTEE TESTIMONY

REF: (A) MANAGUA 2178; (B) STATE 110231

SUMMARY: AS ARGUED REFTEL A THE EMBASSY BELIEVES INACCURATE OR FALSE CHARGES AGAINST US PROGRAMS OR POLICIES IN NICARAGUA MADE IN LONG SUBCOMMITTEE HEARINGS SHOULD NOT STAND UNANSWERED EVEN THOUGH SEVERAL OF THESE SAME OR SIMILAR CHARGES HAVE BEEN ANSWERED ELSEWHERE. THE FOLLOWING RESPONSES HAVE BEEN PREPARED AS REQUESTED REFTEL B. PAGE NUMBERS CORRESPOND TO COMMITTEE PRINT OF APRIL 5 AND 21 HEARINGS RECENTLY RECEIVED BY POUCH. END SUMMARY.

1. P. 14; STATEMENT: "INTERNATIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM GRANTS HAVE CLOSE TO DOUBLED IN THE PAST FOUR YEARS."
RESPONSE: THE STATEMENT AND CORRESPONDING FIGURES ARE CORRECT BUT LEAD TO A DISTORTED PICTURE. THE 1973-74 TRAINING LEVEL WAS MUCH LOWER THAN NORMAL BECAUSE THE GN HAS HEAVILY INVOLVED IN RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS FOLLOWING THE DECEMBER 1972 EARTHQUAKE WHICH DESTROYED CENTRAL MANAGUA. TRAINING WAS DEFERRED. THE MORE RECENT HIGHER LEVEL OF TRAINING REFLECTS A MORE NORMAL SITUATION BUT STILL WITH SOME CATCHING UP ON TRAINING EARLIER DEFERRED, PLUS HIGHER COSTS DUE TO INFLATION.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 MANAGU 02506 01 OF 02 271801Z

P. 14; STATEMENT: "NICARAGUA SHOULD BE AIDED, BUT NO ONE WHO KNOWS WHAT IS GOING ON IN NICARAGUA, AND WHAT HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR OVER 40 YEARS CAN HONESTLY BELIEVE THAT TO GIVE DEVELOPMENT AID TO THE SOMOZA GOVERNMENT WILL ACTUALLY HELP THE PEOPLE. NOR CAN ANYONE SERIOUSLY THINK THAT TO GIVE MILITARY AID WHICH WILL ENABLE SOMOZA TO CONTINUE USING THE NATIONAL GUARD AS A PRAETORIAN ARMY IS IN THE

BEST INTERESTS OF OUR OPPRESSED PEOPLE."

RESPONSE: THIS SUGGESTS THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS EITHER UNAWARE OF CONDITIONS IN NICARAGUA OR CYNICALLY HAS BEEN PROVIDING ASSISTANCE UNDER THE GUISE OF BENEFITING THE NICARAGUAN PEOPLE WHEN IT KNEW THAT WAS NOT THE CASE. THE FACT IS THAT, THROUGH ITS DEVELOPMENT AND EARTHQUAKE RECONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE, THE U.S. HAS BENEFITED THE PEOPLE OF NICARAGUA, PARTICULARLY THE POOREST CITIZENS. A MODEST AMOUNT OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE, MOSTLY LOANS AND TRAINING, HAS CONTRIBUTED TO A SMALLER AMOUNT OF NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT REVENUES BEING SPENT ON DEFENSE THAN IN MOST COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD. IT HAS ALSO EXPOSED THE NICARAGUAN MILITARY TO INSTRUCTION IN U.S. MILITARY DOCTRINE AS WELL AS TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION SUCH AS EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE WHICH ALSO SERVES TO FREE MORE OF THE BUDGET FOR CIVIL EXPENDITURES.

P. 14; STATEMENT: "...THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO TRUTH TO STATEMENTS ONLY RECENTLY MADE BY SOME STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICERS IN THE SENSE THAT THE CAPUCHIN FATHERS IN NICARAGUA WOULD BE OPEN TO REVISING THE NUMBERS OF VICTIMS DOWNWARD FROM THAT STATED IN THEIR DOCUMENT."

RESPONSE: THE 3/2 NY TIMES ARTICLE BASED ON AN INTERVIEW WITH THE CAPUCHIN FATHERS STATED THAT 42 PERSONS HAD BEEN KILLED OR LED AWAY BY THE GUARDIA AT KASKITA. THE LIST COMILED BY THE CAPUCHIN FATHERS, WHICH WAS SUBSEQUENTLY REVISED, LISTS THE NAMES OF 32 PERSONS WHO WERE REPORTED AS DISAPPEARED PLUS AN ADDITIONAL TWO NAMES MARKED WITH QUESTION MARKS, PLUS ANOTHER FIVE UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS WHO MAY ALSO HAVE DISAPPEARED. THE FACT THAT THE ORIGINAL CAPUCHIN REPORT AS QUOTED IN THE NY TIMES HAS BEEN REVISED DOWNWARD DOES NOT IN ANY WAY MEAN THAT IT IS A LESS SERIOUS OR DISTURBING REPORT. IT SIMPLY INDICATES THE DIFFICULTY IN FACTUALLY ASSESSING

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 MANAGU 02506 01 OF 02 271801Z

WHETHER A WHOLESAL SLAUGHTER OF NONCOMBATANTS DID TAKE PLACE. THERE MAY HAVE BEEN SOME PEOPLE KILLED AND BURIED IN UNMARKED GRAVES IN THE VARILLAL AREA. THE BALANCE OF THE 42 OR 32 REMAINS UNACCOUNTED FOR.

2. PAGES 551-559 ARE DEVOTED TO AN ARTICLE BY PENNY LENNOUX INSERTED BY REV. D'ESCOTO. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT ALTHOUGH MS. LENNOUX COMMENTS EXTENSIVELY ON US PROGRAMS AND POLICIES, SHE NEVER CONTACTED THE EMBASSY TO INQUIRE WHETHER HER INFORMATION WAS ACCURATE.

3. P. 555; STATEMENT: "...THE U.S. EMBASSY HAS CONSISTENTLY MAINTAINED AN OSTRICH-LIKE ATTITUDE TOWARD HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN NICARAGUA."

RESPONSE: IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT UNTIL LAST YEAR WHEN THE CAPUCHIN FATHERS ISSUED AN OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT SOMOZA AND IN JANUARY OF THIS YEAR WHEN THE CHURCH ISSUED ITS PASTORAL MESSAGE, THERE WAS LITTLE INDICATION OF A POTENTIALLY SERIOUS PROBLEM OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. NEVERTHELESS, THE EMBASSY HAD EARLIER RECEIVED AND RE-

PORTED SCATTERED UNSUBSTANTIATED ALLEGATIONS. AS MORE INFORMATION FROM SOURCES CONSIDERED TO BE RELIABLE HAS COME FORTH, THE EMBASSY HAS ACTIVELY REPORTED THIS INFORMATION ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION. THE DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING AND ASSESSING THESE REPORTS OF VIOLATIONS RELATES DIRECTLY TO THE FACT THAT THEY ARE ORIGINATING FROM AN AREA OF COUNTER-INSURGENCY OPERATIONS WHICH IS SO ISOLATED THAT THE NAMES OF MOST OF THE SITES OF REPORTED DISAPPEARANCES OR OTHER ABUSES DO NOT EVEN APPEAR ON ANY MAPS.

4. P. 556; STATEMENT: "THREE-QUARTERS OF 7,500-MAN GN HAVE BEEN TRAINED BY THE U.S. MILITARY..."

RESPONSE: THIS FIGURE IS GROSSLY EXAGGERATED. WHILE IT IS TRUE MOST OF THE OFFICER CORPS, WHICH COMPRISES LESS THAN ONE-TENTH OF THE NATIONAL GUARD HAS RECEIVED SOME U.S. MILITARY TRAINING DURING THEIR CAREER, THE CORRESPONDING PERCENTAGE FOR ENLISTED MEN IS MUCH LOWER.

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 MANAGU 02506 02 OF 02 271839Z

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-15 TRSE-00 AID-05 IO-13 ARAE-00 ACDA-10

OMB-01 IGA-02 EB-07 /107 W

-----271900Z 088629 /45

P 271647Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3302

UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 MANAGUA 2506

P. 556; STATEMENT: "CONTRARY TO STATE DEPARTMENT CLAIMS THAT NO US MILITARY ASSISTANCE OR TRAINING GOES TO NATIONAL GUARD PERSONNEL IN POLICE FUNCTIONS, IN MANAGUA OR THE INTERIOR DEPARTMENTS, COL. GONZALO EVERTSZ WAS VERY MUCH INVOLVED IN SUCH ACTIVITIES AS COMMANDER OF THE NORTHERN MILITARY ZONE.

RESPONSE: THIS STATEMENT IS UNCLEAR, BUT IT IMPLIES THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS FURNISHING FALSE INFORMATION AND IS IN VIOLATION OF U.S. LAW BY USING MILITARY ASSISTANCE FOR THE NICARAGUAN POLICE. GEN. EVERTSZ AND OTHER MILITARY OFFICERS ARE FROM TIME TO TIME ASSIGNED TO POLICE POSITIONS WITHIN THEIR UNIFIED SERVICE. GEN. EVERTSZ, WHO IN 1975 AND PART OF 1976 WAS COMMANDER OF THE NORTHERN MILITARY ZONE, IS PRESENTLY ASSIGNED AS COMMANDER OF TRAFFIC POLICE. NEVERTHELESS, NO U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE IS USED FOR NICARAGUAN POLICE TRAINING OR EQUIPMENT.

P. 556; STATEMENT: "AID'S \$14 MILLION TO CIVIC ACTION... (INVIERNO)

ALSO IS QUESTIONABLE SINCE THE PROJECT INCLUDES A DATA BANK ON THE LOCAL POPULATION WHICH CAN PROVIDE VALUABLE INFORMATION TO THE NATIONAL GUARD IN ITS CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE PEASANTS."

RESPONSE: INFORMATION COLLECTION CANALWAYS BE USED FOR GOOD OR BE MISUSED. THE DATA COLLECTED FOR THE INVIERNO PROGRAM RELATES TO AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND ITS ECONOMIC EFFECTS AND IS ESSENTIAL TO THE EFFICIENT DELIVERY OF LOANS AND OTHER BENEFITS TO THE LARGE NUMBER OF RURAL PEASANTS WHO ARE THE BENEFICIARIES OF THIS PROGRAM.
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 MANAGU 02506 02 OF 02 271839Z

THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF INVIERNO MAKING THIS INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE NATIONAL GUARD OR THE INFORMATION BEING MISUSED IN ANY WAY.

P. 556; STATEMENT: "ACCORDING TO JESUIT FERNANDO CARDENAL, THERE IS A TREMENDOUS CYNICISM IN THE STATEDEPARTMENT'S REBUTTALS OF ANY CRITICISM OF THE SOMOZA REGIME, A CHARGE ECHOED BY OTHER MEMBERS OF THE NICARAGUAN CATHOLIC CHURCH WHO ARE PARTICULARLY CRITICAL OF US AMBASSADOR JAMES THEBERGE, AN APOLOGIST FOR THE SOMOZA REGIME UNTIL PRESIDENT CARTER BEGAN HIS CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS."

RESPONSE: THE EMBASSY HAS SEVERAL TIMES HAD TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT WITH REGARD TO DISTORTED OR FABRICATED ALLEGATIONS REGARDING U.S. PROGRAMS IN NICARAGUA BY CARDENAL. HIS CHARGES OF U.S. MILITARY PARTICIPATION IN COUNTER-INSURGENCY OPERATIONS AND U.S. BOMBING OF REMOTE VILLAGES SHOULD THOROUGHLY DISQUALIFY HIM AS AN OBJECTIVE SOURCE. THE EMBASSY HAS ALWAYS LEFT TO THE GOVERNMENT OF NICARAGUA THE RESPONSIBILITY TO ANSWER CHARGES AGAINST IT. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS CONFINED ITS REFUTATIONS TO PROPAGANDA AGAINST ITS OWN POLICIES AND PROGRAMS. THUS NEITHER AMBASSADOR THEBERGE NOR ANY OTHER U.S. OFFICIAL HAS ACTED AS AN APOLOGIST FOR THE SOMOZA REGIME.

5. P. 557; STATEMENT: "CONTRARY TO WHAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT SAY, MUCH OF THIS MONEY (EARTHQUAKE RECONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE) ENDED UP IN THE POCKETS OF THE SOMOZA FAMILY AND SUCH CRONIES AS HUECK, PRESIDENT OF THE NICARAGUAN CONGRESS."

RESPONSE: THE U.S. RECONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM HAS BEEN SUBJECT TO CONTINUOUS INTERNAL AUDIT AS WELL AS OTHER INVESTIGATIONS INCLUDING THE GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE. THESE INVESTIGATIONS HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN AT LEAST IN PART BECAUSE OF ALLEGATIONS SUCH AS THE ONE ABOVE CITED. NONE OF THESE INVESTIGATIONS HAS REVEALED ANY EVIDENCE OF ANY AID FUNDS BEING DIVERTED TO THE SOMOZAS. LIKEWISE, THEY HAVE REVEALED AN EQUAL SHORTAGE OF EVIDENCE OF ANY SIGNIFICANT MISUSE OF AMERICAN ASSISTANCE.

P. 557; STATEMENT: "DOWNTOWN MANAGUA, MOST OF WHICH WAS DESTROYED, LOOKS LIKE A STANLEY KUBRICK MOVIE SET, WITH BLOCK AFTER BLOCK OF BURNT-OUT BUILDINGS BENDING DANGEROUSLY OVER THE FIELDS OF WEEDS.
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 MANAGU 02506 02 OF 02 271839Z

THIS DOWNTOWN AREA HAS BEEN REPLACED BY A SERIES OF EXPENSIVE, LOS ANGELES-LIKE SHOPPING CENTERS DISTRIBUTED AROUND THE WEALTHIER RESIDENTIAL SECTORS OF THE CITY. IF YOU DON'T HAVE A CAR, YOU'RE OUT OF LUCK SINCE IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO WALK FROM ONE SHOPPING CENTER TO THE NEXT."

RESPONSE: THE FORMER DOWNTOWN AREA IS LARGELY EMPTY RATHER THAN BEING FILLED WITH BURNT-OUT BUILDINGS. THE CENTER OF THE CITY WAS VIRTUALLY LEVELED (FOR THE SECOND TIME IN FORTY YEARS) AS A RESULT OF THE EARTHQUAKE. THE "LOS ANGELES-TYPE" SHOPPING CENTERS THAT HAVE BEEN AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE BUILT AS PART OF THE DECONCENTRATION PROGRAM ARE PERHAPS UNFORTUNATE (UNLESS ONE LIKES L.A.) BUT CERTAINLY AN ESSENTIAL FORM OF LIFE INSURANCE AGAINST THE NEXT QUAKE. ALTHOUGH NEITHER THE SHOPPING CENTERS ALREADY BUILT NOR THE PRESENT BUS SYSTEM ARE YET SATISFACTORY FOR MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE POOR, AID IS ASSISTING THE GON IN BOTH THESE AREAS IN DEVELOPING URBAN-SUBCENTERS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE POOR AND IN DESIGNING AN IMPROVED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

P. 557; STATEMENT: "WHAT THEY (THE POOR) RECEIVED, INSTEAD, WAS A SERIES OF SLUMS SUCH AS THE AID-FINANCED LAS AMERICAS HOUSING PROJECT WITH ITS OPEN SEWERS AND ITS MATCHBOX HOUSES, WHICH COST \$3000 EACH AND BARELY ACCOMMODATE TWO COTS."

RESPONSE: IN LAS AMERICAS, THE MINIMUM 200 SQUARE FOOT HOUSES (ON 1,000 SQUARE FOOT LOTS) HAVE CEMENT FLOORS, ELECTRICITY, INSIDE RUNNING WATER, FLUSH TOILETS AND UNDERGROUND SEWER PIPES AND COST ONLY \$1,250. LARGER DWELLINGS ARE AVAILABLE FOR UP TO \$4,500. AS NOTED IN THE RECENT GAO REPORT "THE PROJECT ALSO INCLUDES PAVED PRIMARY ROADS, STREET LIGHTS, SCHOOLS, HEALTH CLINICS AND MEETING AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES." THUS, ALTHOUGH BY AMERICAN STANDARDS THE HOUSES MAY APPEAR TO BE OF MATCHBOX SIZE, THEY ARE A FAR CRY FROM SLUMS AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, ARE AFFORDABLE BY THE POOR.

P. 557; STATEMENT: "UNDER PRODDING BY THE GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE, AID EVENTUALLY COMMISSIONED A STUDY OF THESE LAND PURCHASES (LAS AMERICAS) BY A REPUTABLE FIRM OF NICARAGUAN LAWYERS WHICH SHOWED THE DIRECT PARTICIPATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES IN THE LAND TRANS-

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 MANAGU 02506 02 OF 02 271839Z

ACTIONS, PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF LAND TRANSFERS AND GAIN THEREOF BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, INFLATED LAND VALUES OF UP TO 1,156 PERCENT OVER A THREE-MONTH PERIOD AND LACK OF ANY ETHICS IN TRANSACTIONS IN WHICH THE PUBLIC SECTOR WAS INVOLVED."

RESPONSE: IT IS UNCLEAR WHO IS BEING QUOTED IN THE ABOVE STATEMENT. THE QUOTATION IS NOT FROM EITHER THE NICARAGUAN LAWYERS REPORT OR THE RECENT GAO REPORT. IN ANY CASE ANY IMPLICATION THAT AID FUNDS WERE INVOLVED IN THE DESCRIBED LAND TRANSACTIONS IS FALSE. THE FUNDS USED

BY THE GOVERNMENT OF NICARAGUA TO PURCHASE THESE SITES WERE
NICARAGUAN FUNDS.

6. AS RECORD OF LONG SUBCOMMITTEE HEARINGS COULD PLAY AN IMPORTANT
ROLE DURING FURTHER CONGRESSIONAL DELIBERATIONS, EMBASSY BELIVES
THE ABOVE RESPONSE SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ALL INTERESTED
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AS WELL AS BEING PUBLICLY ISSUED BY THE COMMITTEE

.
THEBERGE

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: US CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS, MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, CHURCH STATE RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MANAGU02506
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770190-0595
Format: TEL
From: MANAGUA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770510/aaaaaigk.tel
Line Count: 287
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c7b45087-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 MANAGUA 2178, 77 STATE 110231
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2315656
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RESPONSE TO LONG SUBCOMMITTEE TESTIMONY
TAGS: PFOR, MASS, SHUM, US, NU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c7b45087-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009